ERIC LILLIEBRIDGE

DEADLIFT CYCLE

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Deadlift Cycle

- ✓ On Heavy days, don't wear yourself out on warm ups. After 50% of your max you should be doing singles approaching your top set! Give yourself as much time as you need between sets. There is no set resting time between your sets. You are only working up to 1 top set for max reps on your heavy days.

- ✓ On Heavy days use a Belt. On light days, no belt.

- ✓ For the first week of heavy training, you will need to use your current 1 rep max as the number you will use for your percentages. You're not using your best PR's, you're using your current maxes, what your true strength is at right now. Every heavy week after this (Which is every 2 weeks) I will have you bump the weight up by 10-15lbs on that number you're using for the percentage. It will all depend on how the previous workout goes to determine how much you should increase by. But it will be kept in the 10-15lb range. If you don't reach the goal amount of reps, then you will not increase your training max up at all.

- ✓ You will alternate your Deadlifts every other week, one week you will go heavy, one week you will go light back and forth until the end of the training cycle. This allows you to MAXIMIZE your strength gains by giving yourself plenty of time (2 weeks) between your heavy Deadlift workouts. This is IDENTICLE to how I train!

- ✓ On your Heavy Deadlift weeks, you will Squat light, on your light Deadlift weeks, you will Squat heavy.

- ✓ Accessory Exercises to do after every Deadlift day- Light RDL's (Romanian Deadlifts) 5 sets of 12-15 reps, slow and controlled on the way down, pause for 1 second and hold at knee level before coming back up to lock out on each rep (This is great for lock out work!), Barbell bent rows (no straps!) 5 sets of 15-20 reps, Hamstring Leg curls: 5 sets of 15 reps

- ✓ After week 12, you will test your 1 rep max either in the gym or at a competition. Give yourself 2 full weeks afterwards to recover.

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WEEK ONE

Week 1 - (Light Day): Deficit Deadlifts off a thick plate (or a 1-2 inch platform) 56% x 5 reps for 3 sets Dead stopped reps **No Belt**

- ✓ Do all accessory work after your top sets
- ✓ All warm up sets are for sets of 5 reps leading up to your top 3 sets of 5

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Week One Notes :

WEEK TWO

Week 2 - (Heavy Day): Top set - 87% x max reps Dead stopped reps (Goal 5 reps) **ONE TOP SET ONLY FOR MAX REPS! Use a Belt!**

- ✓ Increase your training max up by 10-15lbs if you reached the goal amount of reps with your top set (Do not increase if you missed the goal reps)
- ✓ Do all accessory work after your top set

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Week Two Notes :

WEEK THREE

Week 3 - (Light Day): Deficit Deadlifts off a thick plate (or a 1-2 inch platform) 58% x 5 reps for 3 sets Dead stopped reps **No Belt!**

- ✓ All warm up sets are for sets of 5 reps leading up to your top 3 sets of 5
- ✓ Do all accessory work after your top sets

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Week Three Notes

WEEK FOUR

Heavy Day : Top set - 90% x max reps Dead stopped reps (Goal 4 reps) **Use a Belt! ONE TOP SET ONLY FOR MAX REPS!**

- ✓ Increase your training max up by 10-15lbs if you reached the goal amount of reps with your top set (Do not increase if you missed the goal reps)

- ✓ Do all accessory work after your top set

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Week Four Notes :

WEEK FIVE

Week 5 - (Light Day): Deficit Deadlift's off a thick plate (or a 1-2 inch platform) 60% x 5 reps for 3 sets Dead stopped reps **No Belt!**

- ✓ All warm up sets are for sets of 5 reps leading up to your top 3 sets of 5
- ✓ Do all accessory work after your top sets

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Week Five Notes :

WEEK SIX

Week 6 - (Heavy Day): Top set- 92% x max reps Dead stopped reps (Goal 3 reps) **Use a Belt! ONE TOP SET ONLY FOR MAX REPS!**

- ✓ Increase your training max up by 10-15lbs if you reached the goal amount of reps with your top set
- ✓ **Do not increase if you missed the goal reps**
- ✓ Do all accessory work after your top set

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Week Six Notes :

WEEK SEVEN

Light Day): Deficit Deadlift's off a thick plate (or a 1-2 inch platform) 62% x 5 reps for 3 sets Dead stopped reps **No Belt!**

- ✓ All warm up sets are for sets of 5 reps leading up to your top 3 sets of 5
- ✓ Do all accessory work after your top sets

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Week Seven Notes :

WEEK EIGHT

Heavy Day : Top set- 90% x max reps Dead stopped reps (Goal 2 reps) **Use a Belt! ONE TOP SET ONLY FOR MAX REPS!**

- ✓ Increase your training max up by 10-15lbs if you reached the goal amount of reps with your top set (Do not increase if you missed the goal reps)
- ✓ Do all accessory work after your top set

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Week Eight Notes :

WEEK NINE

Week 9 - (Light Day): Deficit Deadlifts off a thick plate (or a 1-2 inch platform) 64% x 5 reps for 3 sets Dead stopped reps **No Belt!**

- ✓ All warm up sets are for sets of 5 reps leading up to your top 3 sets of 5
- ✓ Do all accessory work after your top sets

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Week Nine Notes :

WEEK TEN

Week 10 - (Heavy Day) : Top set - 96% x 1 x 2 sets (2 sets of 1 rep) **Use a Belt!**

- ✓ You can increase your training max up by 10-15lbs here if you are able to achieve both sets of 1 rep with more left in the tank. This is your last day to increase your training max up
- ✓ Do all accessory work after your top set

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Week Ten Notes :

WEEK ELEVEN

Week 11 - (Light Day): Deficit Deadlifts off a thick plate (or a 1-2 inch platform) 66% x 5 reps for 3 sets Dead stopped reps **No Belt!**

- ✓ All warm up sets are for sets of 5 reps leading up to your top 3 sets of 5
- ✓ Do all accessory work after your top set

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Week Eleven Notes :

WEEK TWELVE

(Week 12 - (Heavy Day): Top set- 98% x 1 rep (Only 1 rep at your top set) **Use a Belt!**

- ✓ Do all accessory work after your top set

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Week Twelve Notes :

Additonal Guidance

If you are planning on competing, you will need to add in 2 extra weeks after week 12. You will need a week 13 and week 14 to de load and rest properly before you compete. You will need to back track 14 weeks out from your competition and that's when you would get started on week 1. Week 13 is a de load week, working up to planned openers for 1 rep to get a feel for it. Week 14 is a full rest week leading up to your meet, no training at all.

If you are interested in doing this program exactly how I do it for myself, this is my training routine/split for the week, every week

- **Monday**: Rest
- **Tuesday**: Extra Accessory work day
- **Wednesday**: Rest
- **Thursday**: Bench + Bench Accessory work
- **Friday**: Rest
- **Saturday**: Rest
- **Sunday**: Squats & Deadlifts + All Squat/Deadlift Accessory work

You can split up the Squat & Deadlift days into separate days if you want. I personally have always preferred to train them together in the same training session and have made the best gains and progress doing so.

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STANCE

When it comes to your stance for Deadlifting, this really all depends on the lifters build and leverages. Whether you're a conventional style Deadlifter or sumo style Deadlifter, finding the right stance for you is very important. If you feel like your stance puts you out of form or position, then it's probably not right for you and needs some adjusting. Most conventional style Deadlifters like to use a stance that's a little closer than shoulder width, but some bigger/taller guys like to use a wide conventional stance almost like a squat stance with their hands outside of their arms. The best way to find the right stance is by trial and error and observing your own lifts through video. Watching closely at your form and technique and if it suffers at all at any point off the floor. This is no different for sumo style either. What I've seen with most sumo style Deadlifters is either they're super wide with their stance or they have a normal stance, which would be shins inside of the rings on the bar.

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STANCE

Again, all depending on the lifters leverages and build. In my eyes, there's no "perfect" stance that's going to work the same for everyone. You can sit there and try copying someone else's form all you want, but the chances of you trying to mimic someone's form and technique probably isn't going to take you far. Go with what feels and looks the best for you.

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HAND PLACEMENT

This all depends on whether you're a conventional stance or sumo stance. For conventional stance, the best hand position I feel is between the rings on the bar and where the knurling on the bar ends in the middle. Basically an in between spot. The closer you go, the harder it will be for you to pull through at the top at lock out. For sumo stance, most guys like to go with a full grip around the knurling right where it begins in the middle of the bar. If you go wider with your grip on sumo, you risk having your hands catch onto your quads and cause friction, which I've seen happen many times before. I've also seen many guys miss up top from having their hands peal open from having that extra friction. So you have to be cautious with your hand placement and go with what feels best based off of your stance. Your stance and hand position should always work together, not against each other.

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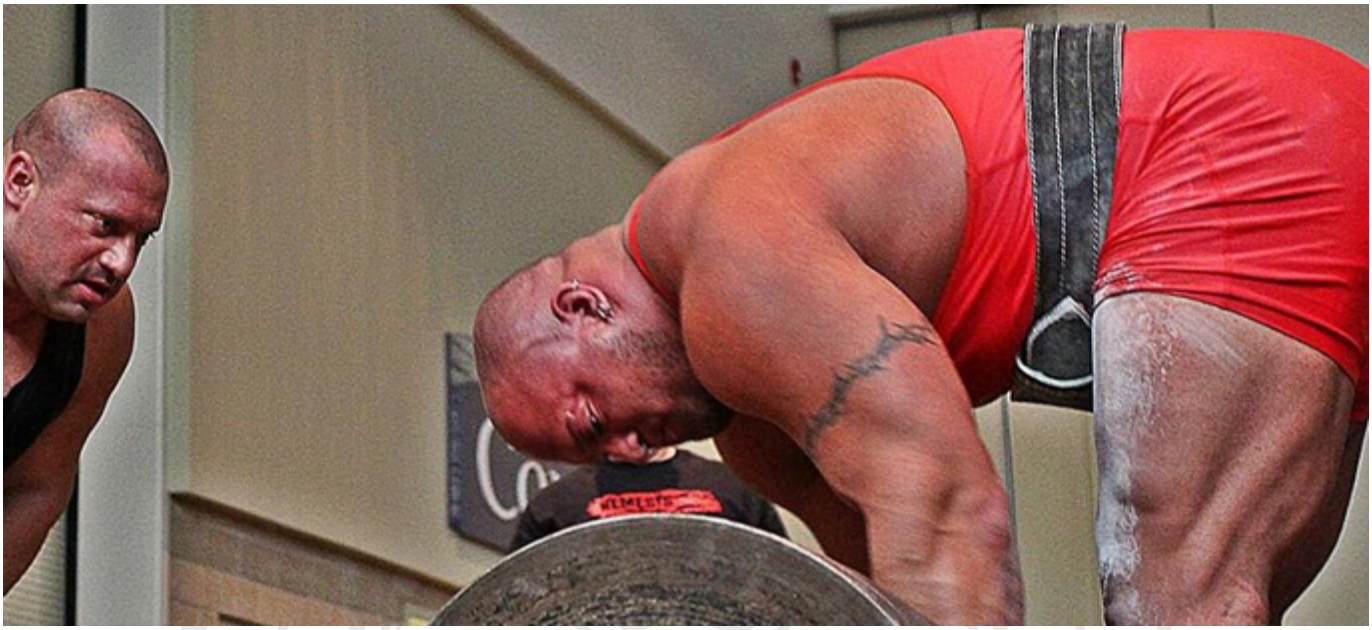
LIFTING BELTS/POSITIONING



Just like Squats, you only have a few different options to choose from for belts. Either a prong belt or lever belt, 10mm or 13mm in thickness. Finding the right belt for you can be a little tricky when it comes to Deadlifting because it can hurt your form/ positioning if you don't have the right belt for you. For myself, I've always preferred to use a prong belt that's 10mm in thickness. I've tried using a lever belt before and it didn't feel right for me. It felt too stiff and I couldn't get down to the bar as good as when I wear my prong belt. The lever belt also pinched me in certain spots around my abdomen which made it feel very uncomfortable for me. I feel like the lever belt is more suited for squatting because you don't need it to be flexible. For deadlifting, you're bending over to grab the bar and having a stiff lever belt on that doesn't want to bend can just throw everything off.

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LIFTING BELTS/POSITIONNG

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Some guys will do a count down (3, 2, 1, UP) some guys will do a certain amount of big breaths before taking one final big breath for the lift, so you're looking at their breathing technique to see when they want the weight lifted out to them. Whatever it may be, make sure you have that down good as that's the most important part. Timing it perfectly. When you have that down, you should lift off as much of the weight from the rack as possible, so that the lifter is doing the least amount of work possible to get the bar settled onto them. You should let go of the bar immediately once the bar has been handed out correctly. For gym lifts, I highly advise to use side spotters to keep the lifter safe since the back spotter sometimes can't grab the bar fast enough if he's not staying close.

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SHOES

One thing that I see a lot with lifters is them wearing the wrong type of shoes to deadlift in. Many times its guys wearing shoes with a raised heal. Which is basically making the lift harder because you're standing up higher. Some of those raised heal shoes can be anywhere from a half inch – 1 inch in thickness. Not only is it going to make the lift harder, but it will put you forward and make it harder for you to sit back onto your heals. Those are not meant for deadlifting and shouldn't be used for it. You want to try finding a shoe with a flat sole so that you're standing as close as possible to the ground. I prefer to use deadlift slippers because it almost feels like you're doing the lift in socks, but the deadlift slipper just has a small grip on the bottom of it to help give better grip on the ground. I used to be one of those lifters that lifted in shoes with a fairly thick sole on the shoe, about a half inch in thickness all the way around. I had never realized how much harder it made the lift until I started training without them. When I switched over to using deadlift slippers instead, my deadlift started to shoot up fast because I was now lifting the weight less distance. The deadlift slippers also changed my leverages and positioning as well. It was one of the best changes I ever made which led me to pulling 900+lbs in the gym and in competition.

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Wrist Wraps & Grip Training

Using wrist wraps for deadlifting can help enhance your grip, but it's not going to make your grip "stronger". However, if you do grip training on top of wearing wrist wraps, you should rarely ever have any grip issues. The way you should wrap your wrist for deadlifting is different than wrapping them for bench pressing or squatting. You basically want to put as much pressure around the inside of your wrists, pushing on your tendons to make them want to force your hand to close. If you wrap them right, your hand should automatically close shut. You'll have to try forcing your hands open to make them open. That's how you know you've wrapped your wrist right for deadlifting. For grip training, doing double over hand deadlifts, double over hand holds, double over hand bent over rows will help get your grip a lot stronger. On top of that, if you have really bad grip issues you should look into purchasing a rolling thunder. When I started to incorporate the rolling thunder into my grip training, I haven't had one deadlift slip out of my hands since then. It took my grip strength to a whole new level. Doing the double over hand work plus the rolling thunder training has made my grip stronger than it ever has been before. I would highly recommend it to anyone that has grip issues when it comes to doing heavy rep sets or heavy max singles.

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